1: Meek E, G-5 (1925-1930) 1931
FF38 Katab FF38

534 drums are double or single-membrane drums of the hour-glass pattern. A common type of drum used by children is a pot with the bottom knocked out and covered with a goatskin. 533 It is beaten with a stick. Songs are sung in a minor key, and 535 the horn players contort their bodies as they move round in a circle. All sections of society join in the dance. Boys skip round and girls yodel as they follow suit. Old men move round sedately, and mothers with babes on their backs join in.

526 The Katab young men hold games annually, which are known as the Chodong Gane and resemble the *shero* contest of the Fulani. A string is tied round the contestant's waist and he is pulled backwards and forwards by other young men of a different clan, as though he were some wild animal. He is then released and falls on the others with a cane, and they in turn thrash him soundly. The body is protected with cummerbunds of cloth, and the game is considered a test of endurance. Girls and women attend and ply the competitors with beer. It is to be noted that a man will not join in a contest with a fellow clansman of an opposite subdivision, i.e. with one who stands to him in the relation of a *nungvan*.

771 *Religion*.—The Katab does not appear at first sight to be profoundly influenced by religious ideas. He does not subject himself to innumerable taboos or surround himself with amulets and talismans. He does not set up in his compound an array of material objects which are believed to be the abode of spiritual forces. He believes in the existence of evil spirits, but he does not live in constant dread of them or find it necessary to be continually offering sacrifice. He is not, like the Bura, a devotee of a host of Nature spirits. When he sees the new moon he offers a prayer for health and prosperity, but the prayer is addressed to Gwaza, the Sky God. This nonchalant attitude may be due to a long association with Hausa Muslims, but it is true to say of the majority of the tribes speaking the languages of the Middle Zone that they are not, like the Jukun, Okpoto, Yoruba, and Igara, dogged at every turn by the fear of occult influences.

769 Nevertheless, the Katab is strongly imbued with animistic ideas, which find their expression principally in the rites connected 593 with the recognition of the kindred and family ancestors. This ● 828 ancestral cult is for him merely an extension of the principle

1: Meek E, G-5 (1925-1930) 1931
FF38 Katab FF38

 [769] 593 888

governing his every-day life that if things are going wrong he takes his troubles and a pot of beer to his father (in the classificatory sense), who drinks it ceremonially and speaks the necessary words of comfort and assurance. For the Katab, though he may on occasion show disrespect to the head of his family, is a great believer in the magical power of the old man. To secure his father's blessing is as important for him as it was for Jacob, and to incur his curse or even censure is to lay himself open to one misfortune after another. And so a young man who has spoken angry words to his father or uncle will soon seek reconciliation by means of an offering of beer and a chicken. Or if he finds himself pursued by ill luck he will go to his father and inquire whether he had offended him at some time in the past. A married daughter, living in some distant village and having for some reason incurred her father's displeasure, will send her husband to her father with a chicken and beer, asking for forgiveness, and will throw ashes on her shoulders.

While your father is alive you have a living protector, and you do not, therefore, require to appeal to the dead; but if your father is dead you continue to take your troubles to him just as you did in his lifetime. And so the head of a family, having no living father, goes, as he feels the necessity, to his father's grave, and there deposits his flask of beer and his offerings of beniseed[1] and a cooked chicken. These he leaves overnight, addressing the spirit of his dead father and explaining the object of his coming. But, being the head of the family, he does not treat the matter as purely personal, and so he collects all his male relatives and may also invite male members of his wife's family. Next morning he escorts them to his father's grave and, assisted by them, repeats his requests of the previous evening. A little of the beer is poured on the grave and pieces of the chicken's flesh and beniseed are offered, the remainder of the offerings being eaten and drunk ceremonially by all present. There is no debauchery at the graveside; but on returning home free play is given to the feelings, and at the ensuing feast enormous quantities of beer are consumed, all members of the family, including females, taking a part. 769 782

The head of the family thus acts on behalf of all the members

[1] The use of beniseed in religious rites seems to be general among the pagan tribes of the Northern Provinces.

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20. An explanation of this state of affairs is to be found in the historical background. In pre-British times when the Kagoro lived in the hills and came down to farm the plains it was the customary practice for a kindred or even a family group to farm lands in several widely dispersed areas and not in one compact block. The idea was that all the family eggs should not be in the same basket. If one particular area happened to be raided by the Fulani then, though the kindred or family might lose the produce of one particular farm, they would have other farms in other areas to fall back on; whereas had they been farming in only one place and in one compact block they would have lost everything they had. Consequently when the British rule brought peace and security the kindreds did not come down from the hills to settle in single compact blocks but came down to their split up and dispersed farms over the whole of the area. Whether or not the concept of a kindred holding of the land may have existed in the past it is certain that it does not exist now. It would have been undermined from the very start.

Breakdown to individual tenure.

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21. The breakdown has gone much farther than the kindred. Whereas up to about twenty years ago it could truthfully have been said that it was the exception to the rule to find a man and his immediate family living and farming on his own, it is now the exception to the rule to find an extended family or family group living and farming together. In two cases that were investigated in the field it was found that the " family " lands had been divided up while the father was still alive. In the one case the father was too old to farm and in the second had suffered an injury some ten years ago which had prevented him from carrying on strenuous farming. In both cases the father was relatively hale and hearty and quite alert of mind. Nevertheless they were both prepared, since they could take no active part in the farming of the land themselves, to wash their hands of the matter and give their adult children their portion of the family lands. The only say they retained in the matter was in respect of the minor's portion and the division of the fallow lands. Fallow would not be divided up until it was actually required when as much as was required would be allotted to the son and this would then come under his control. Discussion with responsible opinion confirmed that this was a general practice and was quite common and widespread.

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22. An interesting check on the above is available from the tax lists. These lists show, together with the name of each ' householder ', the name of each adult tax payer living in the compound. It was confirmed by the District Head and Elders that where in the list a number of adult males were listed

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